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Policing the CIA

The recent acknowledgment by the Central Intelligence Agency that it had trained policemen from approximately 12 city and county police forces in political intelligence analysis makes it imperative for Congress to control illegal domestic spying.

The current outrage, which also concerns the training of policemen in wiretapping technology and explosives handling, is the latest example of a massive CIA program of intervention in domestic affairs which at one time included the infiltration of the National Student Association and about 250 other American domestic groups.

Domestic law-enforcement or internal-security functions are specifically prohibited by the National Security Act of 1947 which authorizes the establishment of the CIA, yet the CIA maintains that the recent training of policemen violated neither the letter nor the spirit of the law.

The CIA's domestic operations, like its foreign intelligence and counter-insurgency efforts, exist in an unprecedented and unnecessary shroud of secrecy that prevents public or Congressional inspection and appraisal.

The membership of one Congressional committee which is empowered to oversee the CIA is itself as secret as the CIA budget. The U.S. Constitution requires "a regular statement and account" of Government expenditures to be published, but the CIA budget is buried in the accounts of other budgets.

This lack of accountability is characteristic of other Federal spy agencies which engage in domestic intelligence. The army's domestic intelligence group and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have gathered vast quantities of information on domestic groups which met under peaceful circumstances and for strictly legal purposes.

Such activity is in clear violation of the people's right to assembly and free speech and has a chilling effect on the exercise of these basic rights.

Congress must demand accountability from the CIA and other agencies engaging in domestic intelligence gathering and put an immediate halt to illegal expenditure of funds for political surveillance.